

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 731

By Littleton

A RESOLUTION relative to Taiwan and its relations with the United States and the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, Taiwan and the United States are like-minded in that both nations deeply cherish their common values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan has been experiencing continuous threats from authoritarian neighbor of China, which has encroached on Taiwan's security by flying in Taiwan's air defense identification zone, disseminated disinformation and launched cyber-attacks, and repeatedly excluded Taiwan from the international system, as demonstrated by its denial of Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the United States and Taiwan experienced a strengthening in bilateral relations; The State Department loosened restrictions on official contacts with Taiwan; both nations resumed the eleventh Trade and Investment Framework Agreement Council meeting; the United States continued to approve arms sales to Taiwan, demonstrating that the United States has always placed great importance on Taiwan's defense capabilities; Taiwan and the United States, along with Japan, welcomed Australia as the fourth official partner of the Global Cooperation and Training Framework; and most recently, the United States included Taiwan in the 2021 Summit for Democracy; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan has contributed extensive resources to help the international community, including the United States, combat the COVID-19 pandemic through the global donation of tens of millions of surgical and N95 masks, hundreds of thousands of isolation gowns, and tens of thousands of thermometers, reciprocally, the United States has donated four million doses of the Moderna vaccine to Taiwan; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan ranks as the second-freest country in Asia, scoring 94 out of 100, and is ranked seventh in the world according to Freedom House's latest report on global freedom; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan is the United States' ninth-largest trading partner, supporting an estimated 330,000 jobs in the U.S., and the United States is Taiwan's second-largest trading partner. Taiwan is Tennessee's twenty-eighth-largest export market and eighth-largest import market; Taiwan invested \$220 million in Tennessee and supports an estimated 2,800 jobs here; South Carolina, New Mexico, Montana, and Pennsylvania have recently established trade offices in Taiwan to attract more investments; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee welcomes all opportunities for an even closer partnership in business, educational, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges between the citizens of both nations, as Tennessee and Taiwan recover better together in the worldwide post-pandemic economic recovery efforts; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we encourage the members of this body to join the Southeastern State Legislative Taiwan Caucus, calling upon like-minded states and international communities to support Taiwan's democracy, freedom, and its meaningful participation in international organizations and cooperation, such as the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, INTERPOL, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and CPTPP.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support the early start of negotiations on a U.S.-Taiwan Bilateral Trade Agreement and the establishment of a trade office in Taiwan, as Taiwanese companies are looking for diverse and free markets in the U.S. instead of China.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge Tennessee and Taiwan to sign higher education cooperative memorandums of understanding aimed at Mandarin-English language exchange programs, thus encouraging and enabling Tennessee's officials and members of the General Assembly to conduct more frequent exchanges with their Taiwanese counterparts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be prepared and transmitted to Governor Bill Lee, Secretary of State Tre Hargett, and Mr. Elliot Yi-lung Wang, Director-General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Atlanta, Georgia.